



# Trail News

June 8, 2016

From the

## Meeteetse Conservation District

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## Game and Fish and local landowners bringing black-footed ferrets back to Meeteetse



**CHEYENNE** - Black-footed ferrets, which were once thought to be extinct, are headed back to the place where they were rediscovered. Two ranch owners near Meeteetse, Wyoming are supporting ferret recovery by hosting a release of 35 ferrets born at the Black-Footed Ferret Recovery Center. Those two ranches, the Lazy BV and Pitchfork, are where the last wild ferrets were found in 1981. Today, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced that Wyoming will receive 35 black-footed ferrets. The Wyoming Game and Fish Department is planning to release those ferrets in July. "It is incredibly exciting for us to be putting ferrets back in a location where we found an animal we thought was extinct. It shows a dedication to conservation and the fact that we have done some excellent work here," said Scott Talbott, Director of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. "It's a landmark moment to return this species back to Meeteetse."

To prepare for the release, five Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) biologists and field specialists will apply insecticide to prairie dog burrows at the site to kill fleas that transmit sylvatic plague. This includes several thousand acres of private and public lands that contain prairie dog colonies.

"Black-footed ferrets and prairie dogs are extremely susceptible to plague. Though great strides have been made to recover endangered black-footed ferrets in the wild, sylvatic plague outbreaks in prairie dogs - the ferret's primary food source - hamper current efforts," said Zack Walker, Wyoming Game and Fish Department Nongame Bird and Mammal Program Supervisor.

Last year, a statewide rule was put in place to give landowners assurance they will be able to manage their property without the concern they might break the law by inadvertently harming a ferret. The 10(j) rule was adopted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, with the support of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, and it creates special provisions to give landowners protection if a ferret is killed during legal activities. Implementation of the 10(j) rule ensures that the concerns of private landowners and landowners adjacent to reintroduction areas are addressed comprehensively.

The Service and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department founded a successful captive breeding program from those animals, which continues to this day. The black-footed ferret recovery team has released ferrets at 27 sites across the continent. Current numbers in the wild are encouraging, but more reintroduction sites are needed to fully recover the species so that it no longer requires federal protection. The biggest obstacle to ferret recovery today is lack of suitable reintroduction sites, which the 10(j) rule in Wyoming is designed to address.

Learn more about the history of black-footed ferrets through a timeline from Wyoming Game and Fish at:

<http://wgfd.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=c7d77fd493db4b2c8e2899134b291de0>



## Disaster Assistance Available for Agriculture Producers in Park County

CHEYENNE, Wyo. – The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced ten counties in Wyoming are eligible for disaster assistance due to drought. Governor Matt Mead received a letter from USDA Secretary Thomas Vilsack designating four counties as primary disaster assistance areas and six counties as contiguous disaster areas. **Park County is one of the contiguous areas.**

The four primary counties are: Big Horn, Johnson, Sheridan and Washakie. **The contiguous counties are:** Campbell, Convers, Fremont, Hot Springs, Natrona and **Park**. Qualified producers in these counties can be considered for assistance, including emergency loans, from the USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA). For more information, please visit your local FSA office or go to: <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>. You can also contact the Park County FSA office in Powell at 307-754-9411 ext. 2. [Darla.rhodes@usda.gov](mailto:Darla.rhodes@usda.gov) or [Kathy.palazzolo@wy.usda.gov](mailto:Kathy.palazzolo@wy.usda.gov).

### Report Livestock Losses

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides assistance to eligible producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law. LIP compensates livestock owners and contract growers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather, including losses due to hurricanes, floods, blizzards, wildfires, extreme heat or extreme cold. For 2016, eligible losses must occur on or after Jan. 1, 2016, and before December 31, 2016. **A notice of loss must be filed with FSA within 30 days of when the loss of livestock is apparent.** Participants must provide the following supporting documentation to their local FSA office no later than 90 calendar days after the end of the calendar year for which benefits are requested:

- Proof of death documentation
- Copy of growers contracts
- Proof of normal mortality documentation

USDA has established normal mortality rates for each type and weight range of eligible livestock. These established percentages reflect losses that are considered expected or typical under "normal" conditions. Producers who suffer livestock losses in 2016 must file both of the following:

- A notice of loss the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss was apparent or by January 30, 2017
- An application for payment by March 31, 2017.

**Additional information about LIP is available at your local FSA Office in Powell, WY. 307-754-9411 ext. 2.**



### Acreage Reporting and Plant Dates

Don't forget to keep track of your plant dates since they are required to complete your acreage reporting. **Acreage reports can be completed as soon as you have all your crops in the ground, but no later than July 15th, 2016.**

#### **We are also taking sign-ups for 2016 ARC/PLC.**

Producers who chose coverage from the safety net programs established by the 2014 Farm Bill, known as the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs can visit FSA county offices through Aug. 1, 2016, to sign contracts to enroll in coverage for 2016. Contact the Park County FSA office in Powell, WY at 307-754-9411 ext. 2.

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#### ***-----Reminders and Updates-----***

June 13<sup>th</sup> ~ **1:00p.m.** – MCD Regular Board Meeting, 1906 State Street, Meeteetse. The public is welcome.  
July 11<sup>th</sup> ~ **1:00p.m.** – MCD Budget Hearing, 1906 State Street, Meeteetse. The public is welcome.  
July 11<sup>th</sup> – **1:15p.m.** – MCD Regular Board Meeting, 1906 State Street, Meeteetse. The public is welcome.  
July 15<sup>th</sup> ~ **Deadline for Acreage Reporting and Plant Dates (see above)**

**Happy Trails to You! Bernie, Ginny, Gary & Steffen**